

This Computes!



Department of Health Services Children's Medical Services Network (CMS Net) - Information Bulletin # 69

Medical Supply Codes

Many questions are being asked regarding medical supply codes. Medical supply providers frequently request supply codes that are not valid for Medi-Cal/CCS—these are sometimes manufacturer or catalog codes, Medicare/Medi-Cal crossover codes, durable medical equipment (DME) codes, or codes restricted to DME accessories. CCS staff sometimes attempt to verify the codes or locate correct codes in the EDS Net Procedure Master File. This further adds to the problem as this file contains codes that may have been inactivated, have been end-dated, or are otherwise not usable. Also codes that begin with the manufacturer's 2-letter modifier cannot be searched in the web-based listing. This article will attempt to explain medical supply codes and assist the user in avoiding common pitfalls in issuing authorizations for medical supplies. The following information applies to all CCS clients regardless of payer source.

The medical supply code consists of 4 digits plus a letter, and the first two digits are always "99", ex. **9987K**. This designates a specific type of **item**. Two additional letters are added at the end, or alternatively at the beginning, for the manufacturer's code, ex. **9987KRM** or **RM9987K**, designating the manufacturer's brand. Providers should request medical supplies using one of those three formats, but should be encouraged to use the 5 digit item code plus the 2-letter manufacturer code AT THE END. This will facilitate more rapid processing of the request, and this is the format that will be used to issue the authorization. Requests using only the 5-digit item code may be accepted, or a manufacturer may be designated when issuing the authorization in the web-based system.

Currently when searching the web-based system for a supply code, all listings begin with the 5-digit item code and list the 2 letter manufacturer code. The user may select the item by choosing the correct 5-digit code item.

Any medical supply code beginning with a lone "A" is not a valid medical supply code for CCS/Medi-Cal and will not be found in the medical supply listings, ex. A6573 or A6573BB. No part of this code is usable for CCS medical supplies—these are usually Medi-Cal/Medicare crossover codes or DME codes.

CCS case managers must distinguish between durable medical equipment, accessories for DME, and medical supplies. DME is equipment or accessories for equipment that is considered reusable and relatively permanent. DME and certain DME accessories have codes specific to DME and are found in that portion of the Provider Manual. These codes always begin with a letter, ex. E0450 or A7044. They do not have a manufacturer designation at the end.

Medical supplies are those items that may be re-used a number of times but are considered disposable, and while they may be used in conjunction with a piece of DME, they are not an integral part of the DME item. For example, suction tubing or catheters allow a user to administer suction, but the suction pump works without the catheter. They are disposable. These items are medical supplies. In contrast, a disposable or non-disposable canister for a suction pump is integral to the function of the pump, is re-used for a long period of time, and is therefore considered an accessory or part of the DME, and uses a DME code, not a medical supply code.

Many categories of medical supplies have a miscellaneous supply code that may be used when a specific item code does not exist. These miscellaneous codes are listed in the Provider Manual. However, these codes may not be used if a specific code generally describes the item. Incorrect use of the miscellaneous code may result in non-payment.

9999A designates an unlisted medical supply; 9999AZZ designates an unlisted medical supply with unknown manufacturer. These codes may be used when no listed code applies to the item **and** the miscellaneous code given in the general item category also does not apply. This will most frequently be used when the supply item is very new or highly specialized, but should not be needed for a common category of supplies. This is similar to a “by-report” DME code and the item description, manufacturer, and item number must be indicated in the special instructions portion of the authorization. The provider must follow the rules for claiming for unlisted items and MUST attach a hard copy of the CCS authorization to the claim when using this code. Please put this information in the special instructions portion of the authorization when authorizing this code.

Authorized medical supply codes must always match a code and item description found in the Medi-Cal Allied Health Provider Manual. CCS staff are reminded that if a requested medical supply code cannot be found in the new web-based system, they should take the following action:

- Contact the provider to obtain a correct code; emphasize they must use a regular Medi-Cal code, not a Medi-Cal/Medicare crossover code or a manufacturer catalog number.
- Clarify whether the requested item is a medical supply item or a DME item or accessory.
- Refer to the Medi-Cal Allied Health Provider Manual for a list of all correct Medi-Cal supply codes; refer the medical supply provider to the Manual as well.

- Check to see if there is a miscellaneous item supply code listed in the general category for the supply in question. The provider should be aware of which items these codes apply to.
- Inquire whether the unlisted supply code (9999A or 9999AZZ) may be appropriate. This is to be used when a specific code or an appropriate miscellaneous code does not exist. The provider should be aware of which items this code applies to.
- Refer the provider to EDS provider help-desk at 1-800-541-5555 for assistance.

In addition, you are requested to:

- Book mark on your computer the Medi-Cal Allied Health Provider Manual link for medical supplies listings as follows: http://files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/pubsframe.asp?hURL=/pubsdoco/manual/man_query.asp&wSearch=%28%23filename+%2A%5F%2Aa00%2A%2Edoc+OR+%23filename+%2A%5F%2Aa00%2A%2Ezip+OR+%23filename+%2A%5F%2Aa04%2A%2Edoc+OR+%23filename+%2A%5F%2Aa04%2A%2Ezip+OR+%23filename+%2A%5F%2Az00%2A%2Edoc+OR+%23filename+%2A%5F%2Az00%2A%2Ezip+OR+%23filename+%2A%5F%2Az02%2A%2Edoc+OR+%23filename+%2A%5F%2Az02%2A%2Ezip%29&wFLogo=Durable+Medical+Equipment+and+Medical+Supplies+%28DME%29&wFLogoH=52&wFLogoW=516&wAlt=Durable+Medical+Equipmen. (Scroll down and select Medical Supply lists 1-4). This is essential for all CCS case managers. The appropriate link for DME lists should also be book marked as follows: http://files.medi-cal.ca.gov/pubsdoco/publications/masters-MTP/Part2/duracd_a04a06a08p00.doc.
- Avoid referencing the EDS Net Procedure Master File to check supply codes

It is the responsibility of the medical supply provider to request items using the proper code. CCS Branch is developing web-based pop-up windows to assist staff with selection of codes and quantities for medical supplies. However until this project is functional, there remains considerable code confusion among the providers. Avoid guessing on the correct code. While it may seem the quickest alternative, it may put you at fault for mistakes and denied claims. Following the steps outlined above should minimize irresolvable disputes between CCS and providers.